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nelson
CARES
society

May 2, 2011

Dear Friends

Nelson - Making it a Real Home for Everyone!

This is a difficult letter for me to write to you... as no matter how much I see the freshness and beauty of Spring around us, I also see the 'darkness and cold' of winter lingering on for far too long in the lives of many people in our community. The coming of Spring, for many, simply means continued challenges to find a way to make Nelson a "real home" – a home with safe, comfortable places to live, incomes sufficient to allow for full participation in community life, and support systems to help through rough times.

You may be surprised (or not) to know that, in Nelson, 335 people per week are in need of emergency food, that 300 people per year use the Stepping Stones homeless shelter and a large percentage of them stay for 30 days or more, that over 130 people per day access the Salvation Army's free food, laundry, and shower services, and that just under 600 people per year access The Advocacy Centre for assistance with applying for welfare or disability benefits or to deal with other poverty-related issues.

While it may feel uncomfortable for you under this Spring sunshine to think about this darker side of Nelson, I feel compelled to "shine a light" on the rapidly increasing level of poverty in this community. I am almost certain that you, too, see what I see and that you know people who are close to, or living in, poverty. It has for some time now become a new and very visible face in our community.

You may be thinking that there is little you can do to stem the tide of increasing poverty, that only the government can turn things around or that the state of the economy is out of our hands. While the government certainly has a role to play, we at Nelson CARES Society believe that for many, a personalized, supportive "hand up" can take someone from a life of poverty to one of self-sufficiency and self-worth. We believe that helping people one person at a time does make a difference, and we are inviting you to help us in our work.

Here is an example of how your \$100 donation to Nelson CARES Society will help a man living in the homeless shelter: It starts with the purchase of a warm blanket and some nutritious food followed by several good night sleeps, support from an Outreach Worker to find a job, and the purchase of a pair of work boots. Soon this man is working, earning an income, living on his own, contributing to the community and, its economy, and feeling good about really being able to call Nelson his "home". And, by the way, this man is someone's son, brother, husband, father, uncle, or friend. Suddenly, the "family" of Nelson is stronger again.

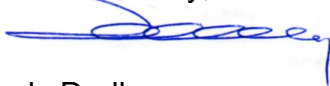
So you can see that we really are all in this together. As they say, "we are only as strong as our weakest members". Nelson can and should be a "real home" for everyone. Help us to help others to become strong again and to be proud to call Nelson their home.

For over 35 years, the programs of Nelson CARES Society have been supporting people living in poverty and people living with disabilities. We also work to bring awareness to the importance of a clean and sustainable environment for all. As you consider making your pledge to help us help others, we invite you to visit our website for more information about our services at www.nelsoncares.ca . We welcome your inquiries and your comments about poverty and other social issues impacting our community.

We have made it very easy for you to make your donation to Nelson CARES' Society. You can donate on-line by going to our website at www.nelsoncares.ca and clicking on the PayPal or the Canada Helps button; you can send us a cheque; or you can drop off your cash donation at our office at 521 Vernon Street. All donations over \$10 are eligible for a tax receipt.

In closing, I would like to sincerely thank you for your donation and your "partnership" with us this year in meeting the face of poverty in our community head on. May the sunshine of Spring shine equally upon you and everyone in our beautiful community!

Yours sincerely,



Jody Dudley
Board Chair

P.S. For only \$2 you can become a member of the Society which entitles you to vote in matters at the Society's Annual General Meeting and an opportunity to join our Board of Directors. The more members we have, the more community support we can convey to other funding groups.



Yes, I want to support the important work of Nelson CARES Society!

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email address: _____

Donation cheque enclosed for: \$35 _____ \$50 _____ \$75 _____ Other \$ _____

Enclosed is an additional \$2.00 for a one-year membership in the Society \$ _____

If you would like your gift to benefit a particular program of Nelson CARES Society, please specify: _____

If you wish to make an on-line donation, please visit www.nelsoncares.ca.